



Advocates for people with intellectual disabilities
and related developmental disabilities

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March 3, 2009

Testimony before The Environment Committee

**RE: HB 6572 An Act Concerning Banning Bisphenol-A in
Children's Products and Food Products and Prohibiting
Certain Alternative Substances**

And

**SB 919 An Act Phasing Out the Use of Polybrominated
Diphenyl Ethers**

by

**Lynn Warner, Executive Director
The Arc of Connecticut**

Good morning Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and Members of the Environment Committee. I am Lynn Warner the Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, a 57-year-old statewide advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. We have 23 local chapters that provide supports, services, and advocacy for individuals with intellectual disabilities throughout Connecticut.

I am here today to testify in support of both **HB 6572 An Act Concerning Banning Bisphenol-A in Children's Products and Food Products and Prohibiting Certain Alternative Substances** And **SB 919 An Act Phasing Out the Use of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers**. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today.

In both bills the state would be initiating important steps to keep our children safe. In a study by The American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities "Environmental Contaminants and Their Relation to Learning, Behavioral and Developmental Disorders", the researchers link a number of disability issues to environmental contaminants.

The Arc/Connecticut, Inc. Member Chapters: Futures, Inc., Middletown / Greater Enfield Arc / Family Options, Watertown / Arc of Farmington Valley / Friends of New Milford, Inc. / Litchfield County Arc / LOV-Arc, Westbrook / MARC, Inc., Manchester / MARC: Community Resources, Portland / Arc of Meriden-Wallingford / Arc of Greater New Haven / Arc/New London County / Options, Unlimited / Arc of Plainville / Arc of Quinebaug Valley / SARAH Inc., Guilford / SARAH Seneca Residential Services / SARAH Tuxis Residential Services / STAR, Norwalk / Arc of Southington / Tri County Arc, Columbia / Waterbury Arc / WeCAHR, Danbury

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In both bills the state would be initiating important steps to keep our children safe. In a study by The American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities "Environmental Contaminants and Their Relation to Learning, Behavioral and Developmental Disorders", the researchers link a number of disability issues to environmental contaminants. On page 4 of this study it talks about endocrine disruptors like PCB and DDT. BPA is an endocrine disruptor and we shouldn't wait for somebody to classify it as being as dangerous as PCB before we act to protect children and expectant mothers from it.

http://www.aaid.org/ehi/media/toxicants_LDD_fact_sheet.pdf.

If testing confirms that over 90% of our population carries BPA in their bodies, and independent science has linked low doses of the substance to a number of health issues including birth defects, then should we fight to remove this toxin from our environments? If BPA is the key ingredient in polycarbonate plastic and used in products including baby bottles should we fight to remove this toxin from our environments? The Arc of Connecticut says "Yes" to both questions.

As for Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers, they are industrial toxic chemicals used to retard flames in consumer electronic plastics, furniture, and mattresses. These products are used in millions of households in Connecticut however these products are associated with numerous public health concerns including birth defects, hearing deficits, learning disorders such as ADHD, and mental retardation.

Solutions exist. Connecticut can achieve the same fire safety benefits without the use of brominated flame retardants. The toxicity of this chemical is the central conclusion that led the governments of California, Maine, and others in Europe to pass new legislation that modernizes their standards and sets new restrictions regarding flame retardants.

Connecticut needs to take the initiative and phase out the use of these toxins, period.

Thank you